



RICK SNYDER
GOVERNOR

STATE OF MICHIGAN
DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES
LANSING



KEITH CREAGH
DIRECTOR

July 14, 2014

TO: Keith Creagh, Director

INFORMATION: Natural Resources Commission

Transaction: State Forest Land Acquisition
Traverse City Management Unit – Benzie County
The Dair Creek Property
Land Transaction Case #20140184

Purchase: 240 acres, more or less. \$625,000.00

PA 240 of 2012: PILT Estimate: \$9,288.25
This parcel is north of the Mason-Arenac County line and will result in an increase of 240 counted acres. There are no excluded acres as a part of this transaction.

Description: Benzie County, Weldon Township, T25N, R14W, the E1/2 of Section 20, except the W1/2 of the SE1/4.

Seller(s): Eugene and Florence Stone, Beulah, MI.

Authority: Act 451, Public Acts of 1994, as amended

Notice: This item will appear on the Department of Natural Resources (Department) August 5, 2014, calendar, and is eligible for approval on August 12, 2014.

Purpose: The 240 acre tract is nearly surrounded by State land and contains three-fourths of a mile of Dair Creek frontage, a State designated natural river. The creek contains self-sustaining populations of brown and brook trout, steelhead, coho and chinook salmon. The riverine corridor on the parcel is a critical wildlife travel pathway and the upland forest pond and wildlife habitat on the property provide an ideal location for public recreation.

Comments: The 240-acre tract of land is located approximately five miles southeast of the village of Benzonia and within the boundary of the Traverse City Management Unit. The property contains the following characteristics:

- Adjacent to State-owned land – the parcel is almost completely surrounded by State-owned land, with an exception to a 40-acre privately owned tract near the northeast boundary.
- Access – the property has legal access from King Road, a County local road.

- Topography and cover – the property primarily upland with gently rolling terrain, with the exception of a steep elevation drop to Dair Creek. It contains mostly young stands of sapling/pole size aspen, red maple and sugar maple with scatter mature white pine along the creek.
- Improvements – no improvements have been made to the tract.
- Water frontage – the tract contains approximately ¾ miles of Dair Creek frontage. Dair Creek is a valuable cold water tributary flowing into the Betsie River, a State-designated Natural River.
- Fisheries – Dair Creek is much colder than the mainstream Betsie River and provides a unique cold water habitat which supports naturally reproducing populations of steelhead, coho salmon, brown trout, and brook trout.
- Wildlife – the riverine habitat provides for mink, raccoon, bear, great blue heron, and ruffed grouse.
- Minerals – the seller will retain a 50% interest in oil and gas rights for a term of fifteen (15) years.

The acquisition of this land is an example of a successful partnership project between the Department of Natural Resources and the Grand Traverse Regional Land Conservancy (GTRLC). The GTRLC assisted the Department in working with the numerous landowners in negotiating a purchase and holding the property under option while grant funding was being secured. The Department is grateful for the assistance of GTRLC and their willingness partner in a Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund project for the benefit of the people of Michigan.

Acquisition of this parcel will contribute to the Department's goals of consolidating State ownership, securing wildlife habitat, and increasing public recreation opportunities.

Engagement: Both Weldon Township and Benzie County have been contacted and have no concerns. The County provided a resolution of support.

Recommendation: That the acquisition be approved, with payment to be made from the Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund, TF13-124, Dair Creek Property.



Russ Mason, Ph.D., Chief
Wildlife Division



William O'Neill, Chief
Forest Resources Division



James L. Dexter, Chief
Fisheries Division



Ronald A. Olson, Chief
Parks and Recreation Division



William E. Moritz, Ph.D.
Natural Resources Deputy



Mark H. Hoffman
Chief Administrative Officer

I approve the staff recommendations

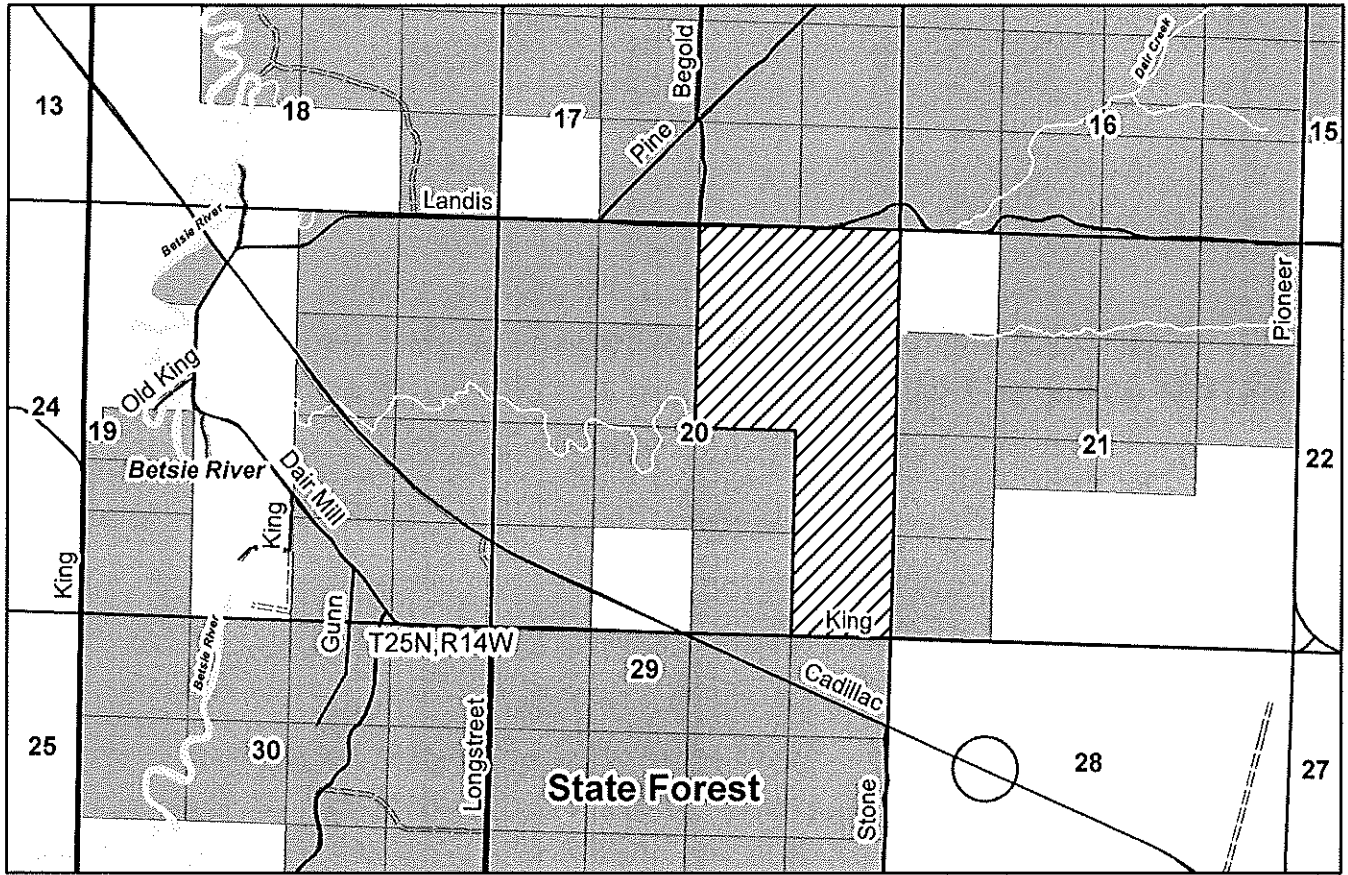
Keith Creagh
Director

Date Approved

STATE FOREST LAND ACQUISITION

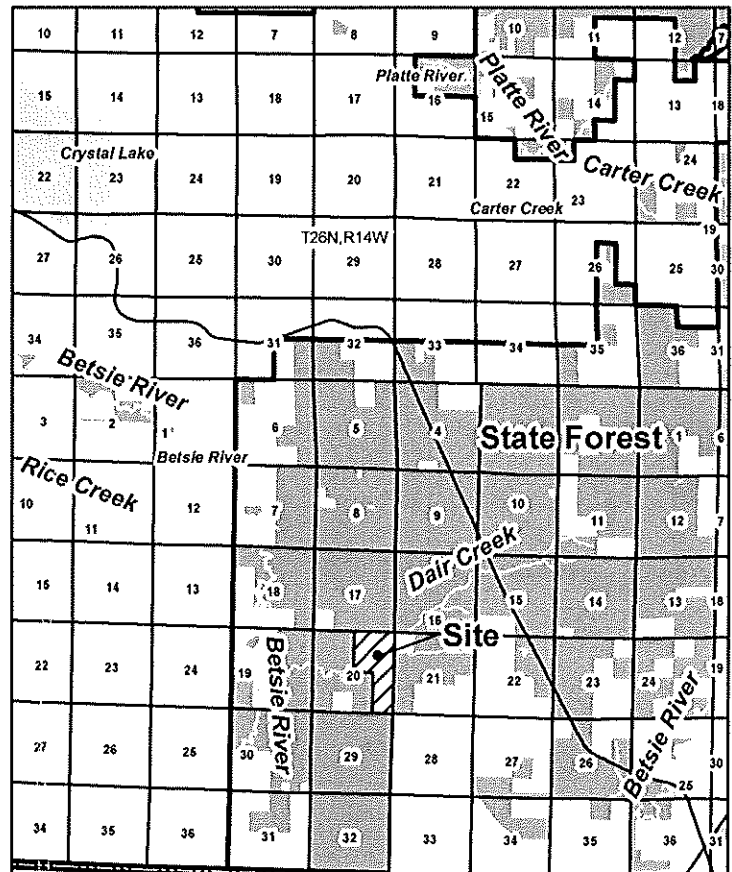
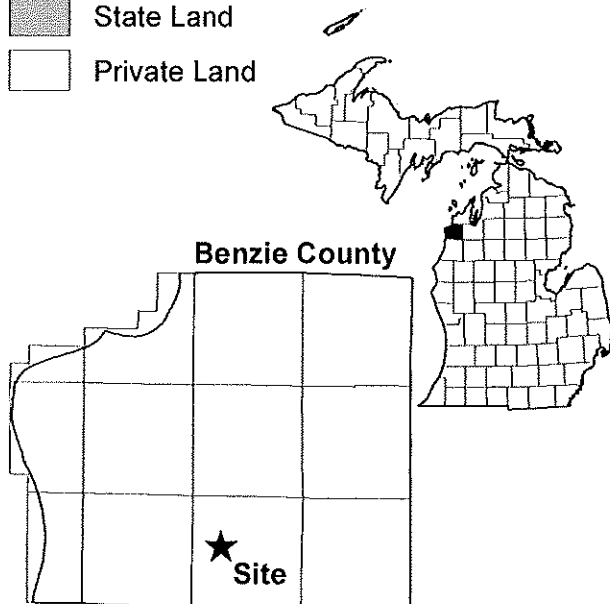
Traverse City Management Unit -- Benzie County

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Section 20, T25N, R14W Weldon Township

- State Forest Boundary
- Land Offered to DNR -- 240 acres
- State Land
- Private Land



Regional Location

